

KEITH MEAD SIGNS ON FOR BLUES

FORMER Slough Town and England centre back Keith Mead, regarded by many in amateur football circles as one of the best defenders in the South, signed on for Wycombe Wanderers on Saturday.

Keith won two caps for England and is still in contention for a place in manager Charles Hughes's team as he was in the squad that travelled to Malta recently, although he didn't play in the international.

The centre half started his career with his home town team Southall, before moving on to Walton and Hersham. He spent three years at Stompond Lane before joining Slough Town in 1970. But when manager Tommy Lawrence decided to return to Enfield this term, Mead also went along.

Things have not gone well for Enfield or Mead since then. Enfield's poor form meant several key players left the side and Keith is the latest to depart. He had a particularly unhappy match against Wycombe on November 10 at Loakes Park when in an Enfield shirt. After colliding with his own goalkeeper Ian Wolstenholme, Keith suffered a painful leg injury and was a limping passenger for the remainder of the match.

Any sceptics of his ability, however, need only cast their

minds back a little further to his days at Slough when he played a key part in keeping the Wycombe forwards at bay in the epic F.A. Cup games of 1970-71. His ability to dominate in the air is his greatest asset. His arrival will cause manager Brian Lee a few headaches, however.

With centre backs Dave Bullock and Phil Wood playing so well at present, it would be difficult to break up the combination. There is a problem at right back where neither Rob Williams nor Paul Birdseye have impressed recently, and it could be that the manager will make changes there.

"Keith Mead is a fine player whose greatest asset is his competitiveness," said Lee. "He always plays well against us and I am glad to have signed him on."

Another new player at Loakes Park is goalkeeper Kevin Rain, who signed recently from fellow Rothmans Isthmian Leaguers Hayes, where he was reserve keeper to Ian Bath. Kevin has also played for Oxford University and Oxford City and in fact, turned out for Wokingham Town against Wycombe last term.

Graham Mackenzie, who played so well for the Blues in their 4-0 win over Clapton last week, played for an A.F.A. Schools side on Wednesday and scored two goals in their 4-1 win over an F.A. Youth XI. Graham apparently had a particularly impressive game watched by some of the leading professional managers and scouts. Martin Swadling, who is training with Wycombe at present, played for the F.A. XI.



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